

Ambassador Mull's Remarks at the Farewell Reception
Warsaw, August 20, 2015

Thank you all for coming tonight for a very special occasion to welcome the American Embassy's new Deputy Chief of Mission John Law and his wife Jodie.

Those of you who have worked in an Embassy know that the hardest job in diplomacy is working as the deputy chief of mission. While the Ambassador enjoys press attention, attends glamorous events, and participates in strategic discussions with Presidents and ministers, it is the deputy chief of mission who delivers the policy outcomes the Ambassador requests, supervises every aspect of the Embassy's work, enforces discipline, and hardest of all, tells the Ambassador when he is wrong. And believe me, it has happened more than once!

For this most difficult job, we are really blessed to welcome John Law and his wife Jodie. John even has the perfect name for the job: Jan Prawo! John and Jodie have led a distinguished and challenging diplomatic career for the past 25 years, representing the United States in such places as Korea, Venezuela, Chile, Spain, the Czech Republic, Afghanistan, and most recently as deputy chief of our large mission in Panama. John and Jodie have two daughters in the cider business in Atlanta, Georgia, and I made John promise before taking this job that he would not try to block Polish cider exports to the United States. John and Jodie have been studying Polish for the past year, and I know you will be very impressed with the results. Dear guests, please join me in giving a very warm welcome to Poland to Deputy Chief of Mission John Law!

(...)

Tonight is also a very special occasion for Cheri and me, because next week, we will depart this beloved country after spending an amazing nine years of our lives here. The Nobel Laureate Wisława Szymborska wrote about the human soul:

*“Radość i smutek
to nie są dla niej dwa różne uczucia.
Tylko w ich połączeniu
jest przy nas obecna.”*

I tell you, we very much feel our souls tonight because we are filled with tremendous joy and sadness. The sadness of saying goodbye to this beautiful country and its warm-hearted and generous people. Of moving away from beloved friends, so many of whom are here tonight. Of finishing our partnership with our extraordinary colleagues at the American Embassy, both Poles and Americans, who achieve miracles every day. And the sadness of knowing that the next time we want a really delicious loaf of fresh Polish bread, we can't just walk down the street to Supersam!

But we also are filled with the joy of so many happy memories from Poland. The first two years of our marriage here in the 1980s. The extraordinary victory of democracy in Poland in 1989. The miracle of becoming parents here in the 1990s. Watching Poland join NATO and the European Union and go on to become an important and growing European power and valuable ally to the United States. The enormous hospitality, delicious food and drink, and beautiful countryside of all of Poland's 16 provinces I've been honored to visit. Riding a bicycle along the Baltic coast. Jumping out of an airplane over Kraków. And this week flying across Poland in an F16!

We leave Poland with a warm sense of pride in the accomplishments that Poles and Americans have been able to achieve together in the last three years in strengthening the U.S.-Polish relationship. We have had unprecedented political engagement, with visits from President Obama, Vice President Biden, almost half of the President's cabinet, and a large number of senior leaders from our Congress and U.S. government agencies. With Prime Minister Siemoniak, we have expanded our military cooperation to levels never seen in the history of our relationship, with an unprecedented presence of American troops and equipment on Polish soil, that will grow even more next year, and visits from almost every major American military leader. We have grown American investment to record levels, creating over 200,000 jobs for Polish workers. And we have worked more closely than ever before on our many common diplomatic interests in support of freedom and democracy, in Europe and around the world. So thanks to you all in the Polish and American communities for your friendship and partnership in achieving so much these past few years! Thank you to my amazing colleagues in the U.S. Mission to Poland for all your extraordinary achievements and support. And thank you to my beloved wife Cheri, for being there every day with love and support, and being my irreplaceable partner in all things. I could do nothing without you!

We will leave Poland at the end of next week for Washington DC, where I will start work with Secretary Kerry as senior adviser on special diplomatic projects. We will miss Poland, the Polish people, and all our remarkable friends with all our hearts. But after nine years here, we know we will be back again to see you before too long. In the meantime, when we feel too sad about missing Poland, we will lift our spirits by recalling the words that have lifted Polish spirits for generations: *"Jeszcze Polska nie zginęła, kiedy my żyjemy"*.

Dziękuję za przybycie, i do zobaczenia.